



# Department of Energy Lessons Learned Program

## Lessons Learned Program Review Criteria

August 1999

### Background

DOE Standard 7501-95, *Development of Lessons Learned Programs* and its accompanying two-volume Handbook provide guidance and examples for establishing a lessons learned program. This Fact Sheet provides a guide for self-assessment of lessons learned programs, with objective criteria for the Standard's program elements in three phases of program development. The criteria began as a self-assessment tool developed by the Pacific Northwest National Laboratory. They were further developed by SELLS members and the Lessons Learned Coordinators from the Oak Ridge complex.

The review criteria provide a consistent basis for characterizing any lessons learned program. The six fundamental lessons learned program elements are :

- Program definition
- Program management
- Program processes
- Program performance measurement
- Training
- Program corrective action tracking

The criteria reflect expectations at three stages of program development:

- |          |   |
|----------|---|
| Stage 1: | Developing; seeking value-added enhancement,                        |
| Stage 2: | Implementing and evolving; further development still desirable, and |
| Stage 3: | Well established; program is effectively implemented                |

### Uses

This matrix serves as a starting point for establishing a lessons learned self-assessment tool and as a ready reference for the elements and stages of lessons learned program development.

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DOE Lessons Learned Program Fact Sheets, by the Society for Effective Lessons Learned Sharing (SELLS), are available from the DOE Lessons Learned Web Site:

<http://www.tis.eh.doe.gov/ll>  
 or Cynthia Eubanks, (423) 576-7763  
 e-mail [eub@bechteljacobs.org](mailto:eub@bechteljacobs.org)  
 or Mary McCune, (301) 903-8152  
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### Value Added

These review criteria were used by the Oak Ridge Complex to review eight of twelve prime contractors in both laboratory and production facilities. Both the reviewers and the contractors found the criteria well balanced, fair, and objective. The reviews added value by comparing and contrasting the various programs, affirming the work of some, while helping others by sharing good ideas and practices.

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# SELLS Lessons Learned Program Assessment Guide

June 1999

## PROGRAM DEFINITION

Criteria	Stage		
	1	2	3
The lessons learned program is endorsed by senior management through written program policy	Formal program policy documents are under development or in draft form	Interviews determined that knowledge of program, ranges from highly visible to none existent	Program requirements are well known at the majority of facilities. Postings give clear direction for LL submittal
Review Comments			
The lessons learned program purpose and objectives are defined	LL purpose and objectives exist in some program documents	LL objectives and purpose are clearly annotated in the majority of the program documents	The majority of the applicable program documents contain LL objectives and purpose Interviewees demonstrated an effective understanding of program purpose and objectives.
Review Comments			
Lessons learned program is clearly linked to Integrated Safety Management Program documents	LL program is hinted or implied within the feedback functional area of ISM documents.	LL link to ISM is clearly annotated in the majority of the program documents	Interviewees demonstrated an effective understanding for utilizing lessons learned to promote continuous improvements.
Review Comments			
The lessons learned program objectives are supportive of organizational mission, policies, and strategies	Several LL program objectives are ambiguous or exist in only a few documents	LL program objectives clearly re-enforce organizational mission, policies, and strategies	Interviewees demonstrated that an effective LL program creates a continuous improvement culture
Review Comments			
Program meets the intent of the DOE lessons learned standard. 7501-95, May 1995, Change Notice #1, Sept. 1997	Lessons Learned standard elements are not clearly employed or are under development	Majority of the LL program documents demonstrates meeting the intent of the LL standard.	All elements of the LL standard are clearly articulated in the appropriate LL program documents
Review Comments			

# SELLS Lessons Learned Program Assessment Guide

June 1999

## PROGRAM MANAGEMENT

Criteria	Stage		
	1	2	3
The site lessons learned program management & implementation tasks are defined.	Applicable Site Program documents are in draft and/or less than half of the facilities has approved program doc.	Applicable Site program documents are approved and the majority of the facilities have approved program documents	Site & the majority of the facilities have approved program documents that clearly define task implementation
Review Comments			
Personnel (by position or name) are assigned responsibilities for program tasks(screening, characterizing, summarizing, & dissemination)	Site-wide coordinator not assigned. Less than half of the facilities have the responsibility assigned	Doc. Reviews indicates Site-wide responsibility is assigned. More than half of the facilities have responsibility assigned.	An on-going dialog is maintained between the site & facilities by the assigned personnel. Interviews reflect a clear understanding of responsibilities
Review Comments			
Important program interface requirements are defined. This includes defining interface/s with sub-tier contractors	Site requirements are either drafted or in draft form. Less than half of the facilities have draft or approved interface requirements.	Site-wide interface requirements are defined. More than half of the facilities have documented interface requirements defined	Site & facility interface requirements are defined. Interviews and doc. indicate an active program is working and that continuous improvement is being made to enhance interfacing of participants.
Review Comments			
Essential program implementation and continuous improvement milestones are defined and tracked	Development of site-wide milestones is in progress. Less than ½ of the facilities have established milestones	Milestones are established for site. More than ½ of the facilities have established milestones	Site & the majority of the facility milestones are established. Improvement actions are routinely generated based on the achievement of the milestones.
Review Comments			
Resources are defined and provided by management to achieve program objectives	Less than ½ of the site facilities have defined their requirements or provided the necessary resources	Site & facilities have defined resources, but The majority of the positions have not been filled	Resources are identified, filled, and future needs have been proposed
Review Comments			

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August 1999

## PROGRAM PROCESSES

Criteria	Stage		
	1	2	3
Sources of lessons learned information are defined, available, and frequently reviewed for relevance.	Sources of lessons learned are well known at some facilities but not The majority of the facilities. Reviews for relevance is not routine	The majority of the site has identified information sources. Most of the facilities have staffed positions that usually perform routine reviews.	The site & the majority of the facilities have identified a vast inventory of information sources. Clear guidance dictates a graded approach to lessons learned reviews.
Review Comments			
Incoming information is properly analyzed, disseminated, implemented, and tracked through formal management systems. (LL are incorporated in work planning)	Information, when analyzed, is effectively dispositioned. This function is a collateral task & not routinely accomplished	Generally, information is properly handled & utilized. Occasional lapses occur in tracking action items	Interviews & document reviews indicated an effective formal system exists
Review Comments			
Out going information is well characterized and properly summarized.	Less than ½ of outgoing information is thoroughly researched. Summaries reflect unsubstantiated facts	The majority of the information is adequately characterized & dispositioned	Review of outgoing information indicated proper characterization & summarization
Review Comments			
Information that has relevance to other DOE or industry entities is properly cleared for distribution, and made available to appropriate personnel	Generally, information is cleared for distribution. Evidence indicates that relevant information was not always shared with appropriate personnel	Rarely does an item receive an inadequate clearance. Appropriate personnel usually receive relevant info	Document reviews indicated that the majority of the information was properly cleared for distribution & a formal distribution list was being utilized.
Review Comments			
Personnel are aware of their role in identifying lessons learned as they relate to their duties. (i.e., develop LL through feedback from job performance or employing experiences learned from others, and self assessment)	Interviews indicated that a few individuals had received clear formal direction	The majority of individual expressed a clear understanding of their duties related to lessons learned	The majority of the interviewed personnel expressed a keen sense of their lessons learned roles and duties. (i.e., LL developed through feedback from job performance are clearly defined, documented, and effectively implemented)
Review Comments			

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August 1999

## PROGRAM PERFORMANCE MEASUREMENT

Criteria	Stage		
	1	2	3
An assessment plan for the lessons learned program is developed	Site plan is in draft. Some facilities have approved plans, others have draft plans	Most of the facilities and site have approved plans	The majority of the facilities & site have approved plans.
Review Comments			
Performance measures are developed and well defined and establish a sound basis for program improvements	Site is developing formal performance measures. Some facilities are using ad-hoc measures	The majority of the site & facilities are using performance measures, but improvements are being generated in a casual, haphazard manner	Formal measures are being utilized to promote continuous changes. Document reviews and interviews have verified responsiveness to corrective actions
Review Comments			
Line management places importance on the lessons learned program and ensures adequate implementation.	"Spotty", Management involvement depends on personal work ethics.	Most of the managers demonstrate involvement by their frequent attendance at critiques, pre-job briefings, post-job reviews, etc.	Interviews, observations & accompanied tours with managers has show aggressive participation in the lessons learned program
Review Comments			

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August 1999

## TRAINING

Criteria	Stage		
	1	2	3
Training for personnel with responsibilities in the Site Lessons Learned Program is identified and available.	Formal training is being developed. Ad Hoc training material is available.	Formal training for the site & the majority of the facilities has been approved	Observations indicate an active on-going Lessons Learned training program.
Review Comments			
Personnel with assigned responsibilities for program management & implementation are adequately trained and knowledgeable	Managers provide guidance on program implementation based on their own experiences.	Interviews & doc. reviews indicate that the majority of LL personnel demonstrated adequate knowledge.	Interviews determined that LL personnel are knowledgeable and responsive to what is going on in the DOE complex as well as on site.
Review Comments			
Lessons learned are appropriately reviewed for training implications, and where warranted, training programs are modified	Several lessons learned items did not get sent to training, some did not get adequately acted upon.	A high percentage of the LL receive appropriate action & subsequently modify training curriculum.	Record reviews & interviews revealed training programs are being modified in a timely manner.
Review Comments			
Continuing training programs utilize current lessons learned as examples where applicable	Less than ½ of the training materials use current lessons learned.	More than ½ of the training materials use current lessons learned.	The majority of the continuing training materials reviewed exhibited current LL examples.
Review Comments			
Training, as a result of lessons learned, is presented in an effective and timely manner	Training is presented in an effective manner, but not always timely.	Generally, the majority of the, LL are presented in a timely and effective manner.	Record reviews determined that training based on LL is timely and effective
Review Comments			
Personnel who have received lessons learned information are knowledgeable of the information and have appropriately applied the lessons learned in the performance of their duties.	Interviews indicate that less than half of the craft personnel remember any specific lessons learned changes implemented	Interviews indicate that more than half of the craft personnel remember any specific lessons learned changes implemented	Interviewees praised the timeliness of training materials. They also provided examples oh how they applied the information.
Review Comments			

Stage 1: developing; under development; seeking value-added enhancements    Stage 2: implemented and evolving; further development still desirable  
 Stage 3: well established; program is effectively implemented

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## PROGRAM CORRECTIVE ACTION TRACKING:

Criteria	Stage		
	1	2	3
Where corrective actions are identified, formal assignment of responsibilities and completion dates are established	Assessment/accident findings routinely are entered in the tracking system. But, less than ½ of LL requiring actions are entered. Some action items are missing responsibility & completion dates.	Record reviews & interviews indicated that the majority of the lessons learned that requiring corrective actions have responsibility assigned with reasonable completion dates.	Record reviews & interviews indicated that the majority, i.e., greater than ¾ of the corrective actions have responsibility assigned with reasonable completion dates
Review Comments			
Management periodically reviews status of corrective action management and ensures program actions are adequate.	Interviews & record reviews indicate that some managers perform few reviews, some never, or some may perform review and follow up on infrequent basis, i.e., less than once/six months.	The majority of the managers perform routine scheduled reviews. They accept verbal confirmation of completion; occasionally validate adequacy of corrective actions	Record reviews & interviews indicated that the majority of the managers perform periodic reviews. They usually select a sampling to validate adequacy of corrective actions
Review Comments			